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General and complete disarmament

Relationship between disarmament and development

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/64. It summarizes the activities recently undertaken by the partner departments and partner agency of the high-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development in areas related to the subject. It also contains information received from Governments on the subject.

* A/62/50.



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I. Introduction

1. The present report is submitted pursuant to General Assembly resolution 61/64, entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development". In that resolution, the General Assembly recalled the report of the Group of Governmental Experts on the relationship between disarmament and development (A/59/119), and requested the Secretary-General to continue to take action, through appropriate organs and within available resources, for the implementation of the action programme adopted at the 1987 International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, and to report to the Assembly at its sixty-second session.

II. Action taken

Activities undertaken by partner departments and partner agency of the Steering Group on Disarmament and Development

2. The present report summarizes the activities related to disarmament and development undertaken by the partner departments and partner agency of the high-level Steering Group on Disarmament and Development, since the last report of the Secretary-General on the subject (A/61/98).

3. The Department of Peacekeeping Operations provided support to seven disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in peacekeeping operations. In these programmes, the Department works closely with the United Nations system and other development partners to better plan and implement reintegration programmes. A recent innovation piloted by the Department is the use of integrated disarmament, demobilization and reintegration units (in the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Mission in the Sudan), which co-locate staff members from relevant United Nations development agencies in the unit to better coordinate their contribution to the reintegration dimension of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration strategy. In February 2007, the Department conducted a joint review of these units to capture lessons learned and best practices. Key lessons learned included the need for further improvement in early planning of appropriate reintegration programmes, the need for the mission to contribute to this early planning and the need to build strong joint culture among United Nations partners supporting the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes in a peacekeeping mission.

4. The Department also co-chaired the United Nations Inter-Agency Working Group on Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration, consisting of 16 United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes, which launched the Integrated Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Standards and the web-based United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Resource Centre, on 18 December 2006. The Standards consolidate policy guidance on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, providing a United Nations integrated approach on the planning, management and implementation of related processes. The Standards are also the most complete repository and best practices drawn from the experience of all United Nations departments, agencies, funds and programmes involved in disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. In addition

to the 24 areas of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration addressed in this first version of the Standards, the Department is working with a range of partners to develop guidance on disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform linkages, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and transitional justice linkages and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the peace process.

5. Recognizing that armed violence and conflict impede realization of the Millennium Development Goals, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) actively supports Governments' efforts to prevent and combat the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, to disarm, demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants, and to reduce and prevent armed violence. During 2006, such assistance was provided to over 40 countries worldwide. In addition to this programmatic support, UNDP has also actively contributed to the disarmament and development agenda by promoting and participating in a number of policy-oriented initiatives.

6. Following a ministerial summit held in Geneva in June 2006 at which 42 States adopted the Geneva Declaration on Armed Violence and Development, the Government of Switzerland and UNDP, in collaboration with a Core Group of Member States, have engaged in a longer-term process aimed at promoting the linkage between armed violence and development and in applying the commitments contained in the Declaration in a number of focus countries. These efforts focus on three pillars:

- Advocacy, dissemination and coordination: recognizing that the impact and weight of the Geneva Declaration is likely to increase with the number of its signatories, the Core Group is working to promote the Geneva Declaration and secure enhanced support. A regional seminar was organized in April 2007 in Guatemala to promote the Geneva Declaration among countries of the Latin America and Caribbean region. This resulted in the adoption by 12 countries in the region of the Guatemala Declaration on Armed Violence and Development. A second workshop for the Africa region is expected to take place during 2007. At the end of June 2007, the Geneva Declaration had been adopted by 50 States.
- Measurability and research: recognizing the importance of measuring the cost and assessing the impact of armed violence on development for effective preventive programming, the Core Group is focusing on developing appropriate tools and indicators to measure the impact of armed violence on development. To that end, a workshop will be organized in June 2007 by the Small Arms Survey in Geneva.
- Programming: recognizing the need to ensure that the provisions of the Geneva Declaration lead to effective armed violence prevention programmes, the Core Group is working with a number of focus countries to develop comprehensive armed violence prevention programmes. This includes work to mainstream armed violence prevention into national development frameworks.

7. In 2006 and 2007, UNDP continued to collaborate with the World Health Organization (WHO) on the joint Armed Violence Prevention Programme. Initiated in 2005, this joint initiative aims to promote effective responses to armed violence through support for the development of an international policy framework founded

on a clear understanding of the causes, nature and impacts of armed violence, and the best practices generated from violence reduction and prevention initiatives to date.

8. At the global level, the Armed Violence Prevention Programme is working with donor agencies within the Development Assistance Committee of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD-DAC) to develop guidance on armed violence and development. As co-chair of the OECD-DAC Task Team on Security and Development, UNDP is playing an active role in the development of this guidance.
9. At the country level, during 2006, Armed Violence Prevention Programme projects in Brazil and El Salvador have focused on strengthening national interventions and institutional capacities to monitor and address armed violence, as well as to evaluate promising prevention practices. During 2007, the Programme will work with Governments, agencies of the United Nations system and civil society organizations to develop comprehensive armed violence prevention programmes in focus countries in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe.
10. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace, Disarmament and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-LiREC) of the Office for Disarmament Affairs has assisted the Government of Costa Rica and its recently created national firearms commission in the restructuring of UNDP and UN-LiREC assistance in the implementation of its national Disarmament and Development Project. This ongoing project aims to reduce the impact of firearms violence on development, and in particular, on the health-care system.
11. In addition, UN-LiREC assisted UNDP Country Offices in Jamaica and Trinidad and Tobago with a view to designing an inclusive assistance package on peace and security. The outcome of this has been a commitment from both countries to adopt a multi-stakeholder approach, which will include the revision of firearms legislation, research, as well as training and community development components, all within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework at the country level.
12. The United Nations Regional Centre for Peace and Disarmament in Africa (UNREC) continued the operation of the Small Arms and Light Weapons Register for Africa for nine participating States with a view to promoting transparency in the flows of small arms and light weapons. The Register's database was established under the Small Arms Transparency and Control Regime in Africa project and has been operational since May 2006. Contribution to the Register encourages greater openness, transparency and confidence-building among the participating States, hence promoting security and paving the way for sustainable development.
13. UNREC participated in the drafting and review process of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Convention on Small Arms, Light Weapons, Their Ammunition and Other Associated Material. Notably, UNREC chaired the working session of the Group of Independent Experts, established by ECOWAS to review the draft Convention. The Convention is a legally binding instrument to stem the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, making it possible for development programmes to take place in a secure environment.
14. In addition, UNREC initiated, in 2007, a programme entitled "African Security Sector Reform Programme", which aims at transforming governance within the

African security sector. The Programme is currently being implemented in Togo with a focus on promoting civil-military relations. Ultimately, this Programme will be extended to 11 other African countries.

15. Further, in recognition of the fundamental role civil society organizations play in the promotion of peace and security, UNREC is currently implementing a project entitled "Capacity-building on practical disarmament and peacebuilding: strengthening the grassroots and civil society organizations". The objective of the project is to enhance the capacities of civil society organizations, through regional workshops, to effectively complement the efforts of national Governments in consolidating peace and security, thus contributing to conflict prevention and facilitating conditions for sustainable development in Africa.

III. Information received from Governments

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[17 May 2007]

Comments of the Government of the Republic of Cuba pursuant to paragraph 6 of General Assembly resolution 61/64 entitled "Relationship between disarmament and development"

This item originated in Article 26 of the Charter of the United Nations, which provides for the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of human and economic resources. Subsequently, the Final Document of the Tenth Special Session of the General Assembly mentioned the relationship between disarmament and development and called on the international community to continue to study that relationship, which then became an item for the consideration of the General Assembly.

The Final Document of the International Conference on the Relationship between Disarmament and Development, held in September 1987, emphasizes this relationship and states in that connection that:

- Disarmament and development are two of the most urgent challenges facing the world today;
- The continuing arms race is absorbing far too great a proportion of the world's human, financial, natural and technological resources, placing a heavy burden on the economies of all countries and affecting the international flow of trade, finance and technology;
- The global military expenditures are in dramatic contrast to economic and social underdevelopment and to the misery and poverty afflicting more than two thirds of mankind.

In that connection, an action programme was proposed for adoption by the international community which includes:

- The importance of respect of the international humanitarian law applicable in armed conflicts;

- The international commitment to allocate a portion of the resources released through disarmament for purposes of socio-economic development. For this purpose, further consideration should be given to the adoption of measures to reduce the level and magnitude of military expenditures as a means of reallocating additional resources for social and economic development for the developing countries;
- The political and security requirements and the level of military spending, taking into account the need to keep these expenditures at the lowest possible level and to keep the public informed on the subject.

In view of its importance, this item remained on the agenda of the various General Assembly sessions, at which the Assembly adopted resolutions 49/75 J of 15 December 1994, 50/70 G of 12 December 1995, 51/45 D of 10 December 1996, 52/38 D of 9 December 1997, 53/77 K of 4 December 1998, 54/54 T of 1 December 1999, 55/33 L of 20 November 2000, 56/24 E of 29 November 2001, 57/65 of 22 November 2002, 59/78 of 3 December 2004 and 60/61 of 8 December 2005, as well as decision 58/520 of 8 December 2003.

In pursuance of General Assembly resolution 57/65 of 22 November 2002, a Group of Governmental Experts was established to study this topic in order to review the relationship, taking into account the changes in the international community since 1987. Its report contained many important ideas, observations and recommendations, including:

- In the new international context, after a slight reduction during the 1990s, since 2001 global military expenditure has been constantly rising;
- Some countries have moved away from seeking multilateral solutions to questions of disarmament and security, as evident in the failure to negotiate a verification protocol concerning biological weapons and toxins and the lack of entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty;
- Underdevelopment and poverty continue to haunt a large number of nations. The report refers to the United Nations Development Programme *Human Development Report 2003*, according to which over 50 countries are poorer today than they were in 1990, and human development indicators such as hunger and child mortality have worsened in some countries and extreme poverty affects one fifth of humankind.

Cuba's position on this matter is clearly stated in the final documents of the Twelfth and Fourteenth Conferences of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held in South Africa and Cuba in 1998 and 2006, respectively, and of the Thirteenth Ministerial Conference, held in Colombia in 2000. These final documents refer to the need to end the insane arms race and the need for States to contribute to the sustainable development of the developing countries by releasing a portion of the resources devoted to the arms race.

The spiral of violence of United States imperial policy has intensified, exacerbated by the resistance of the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan and the threat of aggression against the Islamic Republic of Iran and encouraging the allocation of astronomical sums of billions of dollars to the Pentagon budget. As was to be expected, this budget is detracting from pro-development spending to benefit the

most vulnerable sectors of American society itself, while the United States is pressuring its allies to follow it on this path.

In addition, such expenditure obliges other countries of the world to devote growing sums of money to their defence, since it fosters international insecurity, fear and mistrust by provoking a greater threat to peace, increasing the danger of global war on the planet and accelerating the arms race.

Collateral damage from this same phenomenon is affecting natural and socio-economic resources on the planet, because they are being used irrationally, with unforeseeable consequences for the economic, social and climatic order and in general for the entire range of activity of the human race. Because this mainly affects "third world" countries, it is widening the gap between the developed North and the poor South.

In the opinion of Cuba, the constant increase in military expenditure globally, which now exceeds one trillion dollars, is a factor that suffices to create a climate of mistrust and legitimate international concern. One country — the United States of America — spends on weapons the same as all of the rest of the world.

These are the realities that we must tackle with urgent action. As a concrete initiative, which in addition to its obvious usefulness could be very valuable as a confidence-building measure, Cuba proposes the creation of a fund administered by the United Nations, into which at least half of current military expenditure would be paid in order to meet the economic and social development requirements of needy countries.